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ALEXANDRIA GAZETTE
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The Rat Catcher and his Dogs.
[From the N. Y. Times, May 16.]

A very remarkable picture is now on exhibition in the gallery of Mr. Schaus—remarkable for its intricate details and also for the circumstances under which it was produced. It was the work of a man who was without the use of his limbs, arms and hands, and feet—was dead, and this exquisite picture, every inch of which is full of the most delicate and refined handling, was executed with a brush held in the artist's mouth. Many members of etching clubs, having the full use of their hands, would rejoice could they approach the spirit, firmness and refinement of this drawing.

The story of the artist, John Carter, of England, is full of interest. A brief memoir of him, prepared by Mr. F. J. Mills, states that he was the son of a common laborer at Egham, England, and when a boy, acquired in a very imperfect degree the rudiments of reading and writing. He then became a silk weaver by trade, and followed this business up to May, 1836, when he was 21 years old. At this time an accident befell him which changed the whole course of his life. Up to this point he had led a wild and dissolute life, keeping bad company, and losing what little education he had acquired when a boy. One night, at the time above mentioned, Carter and a few dissolute companions went to the bank of the River Thames, and a well known London banker, for the purpose of stealing young books from the library on that estate. While in the very top of a fir tree, not less than forty feet high, he lost his hold and fell to the ground. He was taken up by his companions and taken home to his wife in a state of insensibility. The doctors pronounced his case hopeless. He partially recovered, however, when it was discovered that he had sustained an injury to the spine which entirely deprived him of the use of his limbs. He had, he says, no feeling or power of motion in any part of his body except his head and neck.

The powers of speech, sight and hearing were providentially unimpaired; but otherwise he was a living man with a dead body. His devoted wife waited on him with the tenderest care to the day of her death, which occurred a little more than four years after the accident. The misfortune that deprived John Carter of the use of his limbs seemed to wake up the dormant faculties of his soul. He became thoughtful, earnest and devout, and eagerly seized upon a plan that promised to give him something to live for. This was learning to draw without hands. About a year after the accident a lady brought him a little book containing an account of a young woman who, having lost the use of her hands, succeeded herself by drawing with her mouth. Carter resolved to try the same experiment. He began by copying letters and flowers in water-colors, but gave this up for a more effective style of drawing. He used to lie on a couch, capable of being moved about as occasion required. The paper on which he drew was fixed to a desk placed almost perpendicularly before him, and so near that he could reach it with a brush held in his mouth. His wife or sister would hold the brush with India ink, and place it between his teeth when, by an expert movement of his lips and tongue, he would twist the brush round until he had thrown off all the superfluous ink and brought the brush to a very fine point. He would then execute the finest touches by the action of his neck, his work rivaling that of the most skillful draughtsman. Compelled to rest after every draught, he worked very slowly and with great difficulty. Every touch had to be considered beforehand, because alteration was impossible; and as his health prevented a close application to his art, his works were necessarily produced very slowly. But free of his works are known to be the best in possession of Queen Victoria, another belonged to the Queen Dowager of England; one to Mr. Osgood Hanbury and one to Mr. Richard Meredith White. The fifth is in the possession of Mr. F. J. Mills, and is now on exhibition in Schaus's gallery.

This work, which has found its way to our city, is considered Carter's finest performance. It is full of character and meaning. The drawing of the old rat-catcher is admirable, and so is that of the white dog, to which Landseer, who is certainly an authority in such matters, gives very high praise. The execution of the picture is wonderful. Not a stroke is thrown away. Every line tells and contributes to the effect of the whole. It may be remembered that up to the time of his accident John Carter was totally ignorant of art.

MAKING FACES—Masks and Faces may be very good on the stage, but they are not exactly in place on the floor of Congress. The indecorous proceedings which occurred in the House on Friday, when an honorable member from Pennsylvania and an honorable member from Missouri, in which the latter was charged by the former, with "making faces" at him, putting his thumb to his nose, after the manner of a bootblack, and indulging in other grimeous, does not speak very emphatically for the dignity of Congress. If we add this scene to the recent wordy dispute between Donnelly and Washburne, in which the grossest language was used, we must conclude that the highest representative body in the country is the worst school of manners and morals from which the people can learn the value of good breeding.

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